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FACULTY PROFILE

Fran Zilonis

Professor Fran Zilonis, the new acting chairperson of the Department of Secondary Education and Professional Programs, just might be the busiest faculty member on the Bridgewater campus. Her task as acting chairperson is to manage a department that encompasses the Library Media Program, Adult Education, High School and Middle School Education, Guidance and Counseling, and Educational Leadership. To say that Fran Zilonis wears many administrative hats is clearly no exaggeration.

Fran, a former undergraduate at Bridgewater (Class of 1969), came to the college last year from the Cambridge School System where she was the Director of Educational Media Services. With her extensive experience in educational media and technology, Fran has set out to bring her talents and unique perspective to a department with a range of missions.

Fran is clearly suited for the job of leading a department with such diverse characteristics. With her boundless energy and persuasive skills, she, in conjunction with her colleagues, has developed an ambitious set of objectives for each of the sub-disciplines of her department.

For the Library Media Program, Fran is working on a number of initiatives designed to strengthen the capabilities of teachers responsible for running library media centers in high school, middle school and elementary school settings. Library media specialists from as far away as Martha's Vineyard and South Hadley have come to the college to retool under Fran's guidance.

Bridgewater State is one of only two institutions in the state accredited to prepare state certified library media specialists. Both of these institutions are in eastern Massachusetts. Because of the lack of training institutions available in western Massachusetts, there was a critical shortage of library media specialists. To meet this need Fran has developed a western Massachusetts Library Media Cohort Program. She now has twenty-two educators enrolled in a three year program leading to a Master's degree and certification as a library media specialist.



In Adult Education, Fran is working with her colleague Dr. Joan Koss-Cole to develop a Master's Program in Adult Education/Adult Learning, which will prepare students to enter the field of adult education. The program encompasses worker training/retraining, literacy development, staff development and other educational efforts targeted for adults. Courses are already being offered in the area of adult education and many more are anticipated.

Fran is also excited about the High School and Middle School Education Programs, which have seen a dramatic increase in enrollment in the past few years. A number of new participants in these programs are older individuals who want to enter what they often describe as a more "rewarding" occupation. Because of the growth in interest, particularly in Middle School Education, Fran is working with Dr. Charles Robinson, a middle school expert on campus, to develop both gradu-

ate and undergraduate programs for the training of middle school teachers.

The Guidance and Counseling area of her department, coordinated by Dr. John Calicchia, is also undergoing a period of renewed interest and growth. The Guidance and Counseling Program is no longer focused exclusively on the training of certified school guidance counselors - it is also involved in the training of adjustment counselors, licensed mental health counselors and counselors of higher education.

Another major project that adds to Dr. Zilonis' busy schedule involves collaborating with UMass-Lowell on a cooperative doctoral program in Educational Leadership. Beginning in Fall, 1996, Bridgewater students who successfully complete the Certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies (CAGS) program in Educational Leadership will be able to apply credits earned toward a doctoral degree at UMass-Lowell and take some of the courses here at Bridgewater through the Moakley Center. This important initiative began under the leadership of Dr. Joanne Newcombe who is presently Acting Dean of the School of Education and Allied Studies. With Dr. Newcombe in a new role, responsibility for the UMass-Lowell project falls to Dr. Zilonis, and Dr. Carl W. Smith, Coordinator of the Educational Leadership program. She and Dr. Smith are excited about the project because it will enable southeastern Massachusetts administrators and aspiring administrators to have greater and more convenient access to a doctoral program in this region.

As can be readily seen from the above listing of Fran's responsibilities, her tasks as chairperson pull her in many different directions and require someone who can move easily from one challenge to another. Fortunately, Fran Zilonis has gotten off to a strong start at her alma mater. She is not only using her background in educational technology to help train the next generation of classroom teachers, but she is guiding a number of programs that are poised to expand and offer Bridgewater students new opportunities for learning and service.